GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:222
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2003
MORE POWERS TO PRESS COUNCIL OF INDIA
BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH;IQBAL AHMED SARADGI

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have accused media of negative and vulgar portrayal of women and decided to provide more teeth to Press Council to take action against errant newspapers;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware that most of the newspapers are brazenly splashing obscene photographs of nude women flouting all norms of decency;

(c) if so, whether the Press Council of India has sent proposal to expand and enhance its powers;

(d) if so, the present status of the proposal; and

(e) the steps taken/likely to be taken by the Government to see that the Press Council functions more effectively?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e): The Government is committed to uphold the freedom of the press. The Press Council of India, a statutory autonomous body has been set up with the purpose of preserving the freedom of the Press and of maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in the country. The Government follows a policy of non-interference in the functioning of the Council. The Council, which is in the nature of a self-regulatory body of the Press has built norms of journalistic conduct. A proposal to amend the Press Council Act of 1978 has been received from the Press Council, which is under examination.